

ANNUAL MEETING HELD JANUARY 17

There was a splendid turnout for the January dinner meeting, at which the annual report was presented and the following new officers were elected:

President - Jim Jokerst
 Vice-president - Kenneth Seyffert
 Secretary - Mrs. George Waddill
 Treasurer - Armon T. Mays
 Recorder - Mrs. I. D. Acord
 Board Members (terms expire 1970)
 - Mrs. Joe Deason

Leo Galloway

The Galloways will continue to edit the newsletter.

Jim Jokerst showed a nature movie that he had filmed locally. The approaching thunderstorm scene was as striking as one would ever see in a Hollywood production.

BIRD NOTES

The Whistling Swans have been at Lake Stockton off and on since Christmas and apparently have been going back and forth between the lake and Elysian Fields, reports Peggy Acord.

Jim Jokerst had Purple Finches and Bohemian Waxwings at his place on January 14. In her yard, Peggy Acord had six Common Bush-tits on January 17 and a Curve-billed Thrasher on February 11. Red Crossbills appeared at the Ross's the first part of February. Thelma Fox has been having a female of the eastern form of the Rufous-sided Towhee at her feeder this month, and Vera Deason still has Evening Grosbeaks coming in to feed.

January 21, Kenneth Seyffert saw two Vordins at Palo Duro Canyon. On the 28th he and the Galloways had two Black-throated Sparrows at the canyon and 28 Boat-tailed Grackles at Llano Cemetery.

Four or five Sage Thrashers were seen February 3 at Bell Avenue and the Canyon Expressway by Esther Waddill and Peggy Acord.

After hearing various owl calls on records, Kenneth Seyffert identified the puzzling call heard in Palo Duro Canyon Feb. 4 as a Western Screech Owl. This call is entirely different from the familiar quavering call of the Eastern Screech Owl, with which more people seem to be familiar.

February 5 Leo Galloway recorded the first Water Pipit of the spring west of Bell Avenue and the Canyon Expressway. Kenneth Whipple sighted four or five White-fronted Geese on the playa east of Memorial Park Cemetery, Tuesday, February 7.

About 5:30 (a full half hour before sunset) on February 9, Leo Galloway spotted a Williamson's Sapsucker flying into a neighbor's tree. The bird climbed to a protected crotch on the back side of the tree and appeared to settle for the evening. Phone calls brought the Whipples, Peggy Acord, and Kenneth Seyffert to see the bird, which was still perched in the same spot when it was so dark that he could barely be seen with binoculars. Two nights previously, an unidentified woodpecker had flown into the same tree and disappeared, so possibly the Sapsucker had been there a couple of days.

LATE FLASH: At 5:10, Feb. 10, the bird again arrived, repeated motions, and settled. The Waddills saw the bird on this date.

FEBRUARY MEETING

A program on the butterflies of the Texas Panhandle will be presented by Richard Howard, a sophomore at Amarillo College who hopes to major in entomology during his junior and senior years. He will have on display numerous cases of mounted specimens. If you have friends interested in butterflies, urge them to attend, February 20, 7:30, at the Garden Center.

FIELD TRIP

On Sunday, March 5, meet at the Bait House just south of the tracks at Umbarger at 8:30 for a field trip to Buffalo Lake, led by Peggy Acord. This will be the first field trip in after the official opening of the Refuge for this spring.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Edwards are new members of the TPAS and the National Audubon Society. Mr. Edwards, who is interested in bird photography, has recently made a trip to Aransas for the purpose of photographing the Whooping Cranes.

OUT-OF-TOWN BIRDERS VISIT

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoffman of Houston added three new birds to their life list, which already totaled over 500, during their recent visit with George and Rona Ross. Near Arnett, Oklahoma, they watched 50 to 75 Lesser Prairie Chickens come in to a grain field to feed. Locally, the McCown's Longspur was a new species for them; the third new bird was the Tree Sparrow.

Over a cup of coffee at Vera Deason's, the Hoffmans viewed the Evening Grosbeaks at her feeder. The couple was also honored at a social hour at the Grady Fox residence.

AUTHOR OF "ARDEA'S WORLD" KNOWN TO TPAS'ERS

If you enjoyed the article "Ardea's World" in the last Audubon Magazine, you will be interested to know that three local ladies have visited and birded with the author, Marjory Bartlett Sangor. Attending the National Audubon Society convention in Tucson in 1964, Thelma Fox, Rena Ross, and Vera Deason became acquainted with Miss Sangor, whose book, World of the Great White Heron: A Saga of the Florida Keys, from which "Ardea's World" was adapted, will be published this spring.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

According to the January 1967 The Gardener, publication of the Men's Garden Clubs of America, the board chairman of Bethlehem Steel gave this reply when asked ten years ago what they were going to do with the then newly acquired 3500 acre tract of Indiana dunes: "We certainly aren't planning to put up a bird sanctuary."

At that time there was an Indiana Dunes Conservation Council, but it had become almost nonfunctional. Mrs. James H. Buell became interested in saving the dunes, organized the Save the Dunes Council, (next page)

CALENDAR

Feb. 20 - Monthly Society Meeting
 Mar. 5 - Field Trip, Buffalo Lake
 Mar. 20 - Monthly Society Meeting

WHAT CAN BE DONE (Continued)

began to educate the public, and attempted to interest Indiana congressmen in conserving the dunes. She found some congressmen of both parties unenthusiastic about a dunes national park, but Illinois Democrat Paul Douglas, who was interested in the situation, submitted a bill calling for creation of a dunes national park. After eight years, the efforts of Mrs. Buell and other conservationists paid off with the passage of the law establishing a Dunes National Park.

Editor's Note: Again in 1967 a number of vital conservation issues are coming before Congress. Although sometimes a single letter from an individual may seem to us quite futile, still the cumulative expression of opinion by many conservationists can have a profound effect on legislation. -- L.G.

MORE ON CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Although not all reports were in at the time of the last National Audubon Society bulletin, apparently the high counts for the nation were Cocoa, Florida, and San Diego, California, with 206 species each.

The birder who took part the highest number of times may well have been Mrs. Anne LeSassier of Midland, who drove 1700 miles to participate in 11 counts. The Phalarope, publication of the Midland Naturalists, gives the results of the 11 counts taken by the MIDNATS, plus two counts taken in Big Bend National Park and the one in the Del Norte Mountains, in which some of the Midland members participated.

Mrs. Sophia Mory reports in the Oklahoma Ornithological Society newsletter, The Scissortail, that among the counters at Bartlesville was a quail hunter who, having counted the quail (live), proceeded to collect his limit!

Salt Plains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma listed 102 Turkeys, four less than the Galloway-Soyffert team at Arnett. For this species, the Welder Wildlife Refuge in Texas has been high in the nation recently, with 287 last year.

At West Palm Beach, Florida, H. P. Langridge led his Christmas counters to a new high of 163 species for that area. Ninety-eight observers spent over five hours in the field, while others spent a few hours out and still more birders counted from their own yards, to make a total of 150 participants.

I'M A SLAVE TO A BIRD LISTER

Thumbing through some old bird notes in my spouse's handwriting recently, I chanced upon a most revealing entry. It wasn't the species; it was the combination of the date and the location that caught my eye. Wasn't that the day, indeed the very spot, of our engagement tryst? With staggering insight, it came to me that while I was dreaming of the traditional rose-covered cottage, he had been--mentally, at least--observing, identifying, and listing birds!

After we were married, the duty of bird listing was relegated to me, and a life of servitude began. Not a chain, but a notebook and pencil were to be the symbols of my lowly caste. (Next column)

I'M A SLAVE (Continued)

How well I remember that winter day in the Colorado mountains when my numb feet slipped, plunging me helplessly into the molting bank of snow beneath. Trying to manage a brave reassurance--"I think it's only a sprain, dear"--to the worried face on the trail above, I was brought rudely back to the facts of ornithological life by the anxious query, "You didn't lose the bird list, did you?"

About this time and coincident with the termination of the honeymoon, such naive entries as "S. Hawk" (Swainson's? Sparrow? Sharp-shinned?) and "Kingwall" (kinglet? gadwall? both? who knew four weeks later?) ceased to be amusing, and a stricter regime of record keeping was inaugurated.

All went well then until, on a long-anticipated Audubon boat trip, ugly subconscious feelings toward that list manifested themselves, and the notebook, containing the entire weekend's birds, disengaged itself from my hand and floated slowly but irretrievably, down into the waters of Florida Bay.

After that episode was forgiven, my avian interests began to extend beyond mere record keeping to helping the bird lister of the household stay ahead of similarly motivated birdwatchers. For instance, at my call, "Lookit the buzzard!" he is immediately alerted for the sight of a rather dark bird, crow size or larger, flying, sitting, soaring, or hovering somewhere between us and the far horizon or the zenith of the heavens, while, "What a cute little sparrow-type bird!" means to look fast for a flycatcher, gnatcatcher, warbler, vireo, pipit, or--occasionally--sparrow.

As you can see, it's quite a taxing experience, this being a slave to a bird lister, but I wouldn't give up my responsibilities for anything. No, sir, not even if that notebook hadn't attached itself permanently to my palm. -- Anonymous

THE SNOW GEESE AT JAMAICA BAY - May Swenson

A great wedge of snow geese wafted over, their wings whiter than the white air, thinned to a long line at one hypotenuse, as the caravan turned, and pointed north,

a needle their leader, trailing two wavering threads. Each pair of wings powerful and large,

but in the air, high, weightless as fleece or petals blown, to lift within the pattern.

Arrowed, yet curved, their course unvoering, varying but carried forward in a ventral glide, all the star-sharp forms taking their own tilt, undulant crests on a proud swell, heaving, hoisting its feather-body toward a divined coast.

And a blue goose flew with them in the dwindling

end of their line. Cooler his color than the buttermilk breasts of the others, his dark feet stretched out, his wings of evening snow. A strange and related other, denser chip let go, to weight a pure design, in the wild wedge melted last into the sky.